

Municipality
of Lidcombe



Triennial Report
1932-3-4

Municipality of Lidcombe



C. W. PHILLIPS, Junr.

Mayor, 1932-34.

Municipality of Lidcombe



S. C. WAYLAND
Town Clerk

W. C. THOMAS, J.P.
MAYOR

Municipality of Lidcombe

(Incorporated 1891)

LIDCOMBE, situated on the main suburban line, 10 miles from Sydney.

Area: $8\frac{1}{4}$ square miles.

Length of streets: 65 miles.

Population: 17,378 (Statistician's figures June, 1933).

Valuations: U.C.V., £942,125; I.C.V., £3,817,204;
A.A.V., £246,177.

Number of houses: 3,490.

Income for 1934: £37,000, in addition to the sum of £50,000 spent on Relief Works.

Number of assessments: 6,473.

Mayor's Minute

Gentlemen,—

As the Triennial period for which we were elected is drawing to a close, I feel it incumbent upon me, having occupied the Mayoral Chair for the three years under review, to submit a resume of Council's operations covering that period in order that the details of our administration might be brought home more clearly to the ratepayers and residents of Lidcombe, as it is for them to finally pass judgment as to whether our policy and works have been in the best interests of the Municipality or otherwise.

Our first meeting was held on the 5th January, 1932, due to the elections being held one month later than usual owing to the action of the Minister for Local Government in postponing the elections from the first Saturday in December to the first Saturday in January of the following year. At that meeting I had the honour of being elected Mayor, which position I have held continuously throughout the life of this Council, with Alderman M. T. Guilfoyle as my Deputy each year.

I now wish to place on record my appreciation of the confidence placed in me by my fellow Aldermen and at the same time to extend my thanks to the Deputy Mayor for his loyal support and co-operation in carrying out the duties attached to the office during the various periods when I was called away from Lidcombe in the course of my private avocation.

PERSONNEL OF COUNCIL.

The following were elected Aldermen on the 2nd January, 1932, as a "Progressive Party", and this fact in itself is unique, insofar as despite active opposition the complete "ticket" was elected en bloc.

Alderman Phillips, C. W. (Mayor).
,, Guilfoyle, M. T. (Deputy Mayor).
,, Wyatt, E. N.
,, Metcalf, F. W.
,, Cutcliffe, C. A.
,, Gale, T.
,, Dewar, P. H.
,, Sweeting, A. T.
,, Richardson, T. G.

It is with regret that I record that the opening of our administration was soon marred by the loss of Alderman Thomas Gale, who died on Wednesday, 1st June, 1932, after a brief illness.

The late Alderman Gale will long be remembered as the Unemployed's Nominee, and it is regretted that his sphere of activity was limited to such a brief period. He left behind him a large circle of friends, and his fairmindedness and broad vision will cause his memory to be revered among us for all time. A by-election was held on Saturday, 25th June, 1932, and Alderman Fred Wilson was re-elected a member of this Council.

The Aldermen have acknowledged their recognition of the responsibilities placed on them as your representatives by closely attending all Council and Committee meetings throughout the period.

Council's Auditors in their report dated 15th July, 1933, stated:—

"The splendid attendances of Aldermen, according to the Minute Book, at their meetings, reveals the fact that active interest in the Council's affairs has been sustained throughout the year under review."

And again in 21st June, 1934:—

"The high average of attendances of the Aldermen at Council and Committee Meetings, according to the Minute Book, has been maintained throughout the year."

And I am pleased to state that throughout the whole period I have had the solid backing of the Aldermen in all matters appertaining to the welfare of this town and its people.

Aldermen of the Lidcombe Council



Standing: A. T. SWEETING, F. W. METCALF, T. G. RICHARDSON, F. H. DEWAR.
Sitting: E. N. WYATT, M. T. GUILFOYLE (Deputy Mayor), C. W. PHILLIPS (Mayor), P. WILSON,
C. A. CUTCLIFFE.

FINANCE.

Our first concern was to face the financial position as we all realised that our private and public spending activities had to be re-oriented to meet altered conditions. We immediately began to analyse the Council's position and found that a new valuation, becoming operative as from the 1st January, 1932, provided for a decreased valuation equivalent to six per cent. of the rateable value; then the Rating Exemption Bill exempted no less than a further £66,079 of rateable land equivalent to a further six per cent. of our rateable unimproved capital value, making a compulsory reduction of twelve per cent. on our rate income, equal to a rate of three farthings in the pound should we continue to rate on the old basis.

Our immediate desire was to reduce rates to meet altered conditions; we found, however, that it was mandatory on us to levy a Loan Rate of at least eleven sixteenths of one penny in the pound to meet the loan instalments on debentures maturing during the year, a further rate of three farthings to pay for our street lighting and a levy of one halfpenny in the pound to meet a requisition levied by the Main Roads Board. which would leave only a very small margin for the General Rate out of which our general activities and services are financed.

The twelve per cent. reduction in rateable values referred to in the penultimate paragraph would equal a loss in revenue of approximately £4,000 per annum, and we decided that this was the maximum reduction we could allow at this period; unfortunately, half of this amount represented a loss to the Council by virtue of the provisions of the Rating Exemption Bill, and only a sum of approximately £2,000 in the matter of a direct saving by way of reduced levy on our own ratepayers.

RATING EXEMPTION BILL.

The Rating Exemption Bill is still in force, and it does appear to me very unfair that Government Institutions should not contribute their quota in the form of rates to the upkeep of Local Government Services.

The Commonwealth Bank authorities have established a very laudable principle and one that might be emulated by our State Government. The Commonwealth Bank—though legally non-rateable property, by virtue of being Commonwealth property and not subject to State laws—recognises the duty it owes to the local Councils who provide the facilities and services that enable their customers to journey to the bank to transact their business, make an ex gratia payment to the Councils, practically equivalent to the amount they would be

called upon to pay if such property had been rateable under the provisions of the Local Government Act. This, I think, should be brought forcibly before the State Government at the first opportunity by our Local Government Association in the hopes of having a similar system introduced in respect of State owned Institutions and the like, and I would go further and say that all exemptions as far as payment of Local Government rates are concerned should be abolished.

If an area be unfortunately placed such as we are, insofar as being overburdened with Cemeteries, Old Men's Homes, Women's Homes, Hospitals, Railway Lands and the like, then if the Government does not recognise the service we give by providing access to these Institutions in maintaining the roads of approach, lighting of the said roads for the safety of persons travelling to and from the various Institutions, etc., they should at least recognise that there is a certain odium attached to the establishment of many of these Institutions and recompense the local people through their Council by way of financial assistance accordingly.

The Main Roads Board have relieved us of a considerable burden in this respect in connection with the maintenance of roads leading to the Cemetery, but Sutherland Street and the other approaches to Government Institutions still await favourable consideration by the ruling authorities.

As the operation of each of these Institutions is State wide and for the benefit of the State as a whole, I feel that asking the Government on behalf of the State to contribute by means of rates or grants is not an unreasonable request.

The vexed question of rating exemptions threatened to reach even greater proportions. As late as this year, whilst the Sydney Corporation Amendment Act was before Parliament, a section was inserted providing for rural lands in municipalities to be granted a lower rate than the adjoining land. "Urban farm land" is defined to mean a parcel of land valued as one assessment and exceeding one acre which is wholly or mainly used for carrying on the business or industry of grazing, dairying, poultry farming, horticulture, etc., "or vegetable growing or the growing of crops of any kind". In respect of any such land the owner will pay half the general rate.

The Bill had passed the Lower House and had reached the Upper House stage when we interviewed Mr. Courtney who appeared to be championing the cause of Local Government in the Upper House, pointing out should this section become law in the County of Cumberland, Lidcombe would be financially strangled as it would make it possible for the Metropolitan Meat Industry Board, the Sydney Meat Preserving Company and other holders of large parcels of land to combine their areas under the guise of "Urban farm lands", thus

securing rating concessions equal to half the rate levied on the area. This would have cost Lidcombe some thousands of pounds a year in rate revenue. We also sought the aid of our local Parliamentary Representatives and I am pleased to report that the Bill as it now becomes law provides that the "Urban farm lands" section will not apply within the County of Cumberland, unless on the application of the owners of 50 blocks (of 5 acres each) of urban farm lands.

METROPOLITAN MEAT INDUSTRY BOARD.

The story of the Lidcombe Council and the Metropolitan Meat Industry Board in regard to rating problems is a lengthy and most interesting one, involving appeals to the various Courts and counter appeals, and at one period seemed likely to be taken to the Privy Council for determination. The principle of rating, however, in respect of this area has for many years past been accepted both by the Board and the Council, but the question of values is constantly being raised. In this respect I wish to resubmit an extract from my Minute to Council, No. 880 of the 15th June, 1932:—

"On the 3rd instant we received from the Valuer General, Supplementary List No. 24, containing a number of alterations to the valuations at present in force. Chief among these was a reduction in value of the area occupied by the Metropolitan Meat Industry Board from a U.C.V. of £102,209 to £81,785—a reduction in value of £20,424, equivalent to 20 per cent.

"The Town Clerk advises me that the Meat Industry Board have forwarded their cheque for £2,768 14s. 1d. in payment of the rates based on the old valuations, but as the new valuation will take effect from the 31st December, 1931, they will be entitled to a refund of £551 12s. 8d. together with a further sum of £1 10s. 4d. in regard to another assessment where the rates have already been paid by the ratepaying lessee.

"Now, as far as I can see, there appears to be no justification for a reduction in the value of this land by 20 per cent. as the land is still being used for the same purpose as it was previously, the same business and the same amount of business apparently being carried on, and further, I am of the opinion that the land has been greatly undervalued even prior to the last valuation by the Valuer General.

"As an instance of this, we had a letter at last meeting from the Railway Commissioners relative to the land opposite the Abattoir area on the Parramatta Road, wherein they assert that after consultation with the Valuer General, the value of that broken land for park purposes is £500 per acre, and they also state that the land adjoining this was sold by the Commissioners at £1,000 per acre.

"The land on which the Abattoirs stand is definitely superior to the Railway Commissioners' land, having the same road frontage and railway facilities, and I can see no reason for such drastic variation in values.

"The Abattoir area comprises twenty-four assessments with separate valuations for each. The main block on which the buildings stand, comprising 762 acres is valued at £116 per acre and the buildings at £831,500, whilst the block occupied by Thorpes Ltd. and containing 2 acres is valued at £90 per acre, and the buildings on this block are shown at £23,200. The highest value assigned to any block is £210 per acre (this assessment contains 2 acres) and varies as low as £25 per acre for 58 acres occupied for railway purposes by the Meat Board.

"Under the Valuation of Land Act, Council is not compelled to accept this valuation, we being afforded the same right of appeal as the ratepayers themselves. I therefore bring the matter before Council for an expression of opinion as to whether the amended valuations should be accepted by us, and if not, for instruction to lodge an appeal.

"Realising that a sum of £553 3s. would have to be refunded if the present valuation is allowed to stand, I have had this amount deposited direct into Trust Fund so that it will be available for this purpose should a decision be given against us."

Council adopted my suggestion and the Town Clerk formally lodged the appeal, and on the 10th August Mr. Wayland reported to Council:—

"Following on a suggestion made by this Council, the Valuer-General convened a conference of the interested parties to discuss the appeal lodged by this Council against the 20 per cent. reduction in values granted to the Metropolitan Meat Industry Board with a view of avoiding costly litigation in dealing with the matter, which must surely follow if an agreement could not be arrived at amicably.

"The conference was held on Thursday, 28th July, at 2.30 p.m. at the office of the Valuer-General, Phillip Street, Sydney. There were present:—

Valuer-General's Department Mr. Legge, Valuer-General.
Valuer-General's Department Mr. Giraud, Dep. Valuer-Gen.
Metropolitan Meat Industry Mr. Merrett, Secretary.

Board
Metropolitan Meat Industry
Board Mr. Lecke, Accountant.
Homebush Council Mr. Kerruish, Town Clerk.
Lidcombe Council Mr. S. C. Wayland, Town Clerk

"A long and technical discussion ensued and I suggested on behalf of this Council that in the event of the Valuer-General, with the consent of the Meat Industry Board, restor-

ing the values to the position they were in prior to the reduction being granted, this Council would not ask for a higher value than that ruling at that time during the life of this Council.

"Many technical and legal points were brought forward, and I am now pleased to report that as a result of the case submitted on behalf of this Council the values have been restored to their original figure.

"The situation, insofar as it affects the next few years, is rather involved and may again require careful consideration by Council in the very near future.

"When the appeal was lodged by this Council and the Meat Board forwarded their cheque for rates, calculated on the old basis, a sum of £553 3s. was transferred to Trust Fund, representing the amount of refund that the Board would have been entitled to had our appeal failed, and I would now ask authority to transfer this amount to the appropriate banking accounts.

"As there is no written statement from the Board in regard to the position of values for the next two years, I would advise that the matter be kept open pending the receipt of further advices in this direction."

The report was "received" and Council congratulated the Town Clerk on bringing the appeal to such a successful issue, more particularly as this was the first instance in the history of this Council where the Council as a body had appealed against the Valuer General's valuations. These incidents go to prove the necessity for a close survey being made by Council not only on the Legislature in its rating exemption activities, but also on the question of land values.

VALUATIONS.

In order to fully appreciate the exact amount of reduction of values and rating exemptions granted, I submit herewith the following table of our rateable values:—

Year	Unimproved Capital Values £	Improved Capital Values £	Assessed Annual Values £
1931	1020849	4043040	291712
1932	871357	3782061	272493
1933	768659	3387140	227893
1934	765965	3385966	227834

It will be seen that the rateable value of the Unimproved Capital Value of the land in the Municipality has been reduced by approximately 25 per cent. during the period under review. Of course, the full amount of the reduction has not been passed on to the individual ratepayers, as the rate in the £ had to be adjusted to counteract to a certain degree this reduction in



Scoring Board.



The Grandstand.

values as our fixed charges did not vary in proportion to the reduced land values.

A further valuation is now being made by the Valuer General's Department, the effect of which at this juncture I am not in a position to state, but I fear from my own personal experience that further reductions might safely be foreshadowed.

RATES.

Our problem in connection with the raising of sufficient revenue to carry on was by no means over; there were ever two sides of the question present—one a demand that our rate-payers burden might be lightened and the other side that our roads must be maintained and essential services carried on.

As previously pointed out, there was immediately a reduction in values and rateable areas and Council's records show that:—

in				
1931	the rates levied amounted to	.....	£27,651	6 6
1932	" " " " " "	.....	23,602	12 6
1933	" " " " " "	.....	22,224	4 5
1934	" " " " " "	.....	22,206	8 2

The collection of these rates has been most difficult during the years 1932 and 1933. At the beginning of 1932 the books showed that there was an amount of £9,559 0s. 7d. outstanding in respect of the combined rate and at the 31st December, 1932, this amount had increased to £16,605 15s. 4d.; at the end of the 1933 the outstanding rates had reached the immense total of £22,095 9s. The rate of increase has fortunately been checked and this year it appears as if the total should not exceed £24,000 for all rates.

At first sight this huge total appears disconcerting but one must take into account that this year we collected approximately £6,000 "arrears of rates" thus enabling Council to carry on with its full complement of out-door staff during the whole of the last twelve months, and it appears that for years to come this Council, in common with others, will have a large reserve of outstanding rates to draw upon, receiving a fair proportion each year which will go towards easing the rating burden of future years.

In the last triennial report, reference was made to this problem and certain actions were foreshadowed; however, the rate of increase in arrears having been checked, it indicates a return towards more normal conditions, as far as Council's finances are concerned. Unfortunately, some of this is due to mortgagees foreclosing on properties, but still a greater result is being obtained by mortgagees and other financial institutions realising that rates are a first charge on land, and are

now making regular payments in reduction of the rates due instead of absorbing the whole income from the property in payment of interest, mortgage charges, etc.

The Rural Bank are now assisting Councils considerably in this direction, and the War Service Homes' Commission are co-operating slightly better, although the position, as far as this Department is concerned, is far from satisfactory. Many suggestions have been advanced as how best to deal with these outstanding rates; a popular suggestion was submitted that the Commonwealth Bank should capitalise these arrears and make loan moneys equal to the amount of arrears available to Councils. I have strenuously opposed this proposal, more particularly so at the recent Local Government Conference at Goulburn, as it appears to me that it would give Councils a lump sum to expend forthwith on which interest and capital payment would have to be made regularly to the Bank, and though this would make some work available for a limited few forthwith, it would in no way relieve the individual ratepayer who owed rates, it would only transfer his liability from the Council to the Bank. Several other suggestions have been advanced but no practical solution has yet presented itself.

WORK FOR RATES.

Realising the difficult position many of our ratepayers were in respecting outstanding rates, we seriously considered the probability of embarking on a scheme by which those ratepayers might be enabled to give service to the Council in lieu of rates. This problem is bristling with difficulties, both legal and financial, and as late as October of this year, a Special Committee of Aldermen appointed to again enquire into this proposition reported to Council in the following terms:—

"After fully discussing the various phases of the Work for Rates Scheme, we find that the commitments that would be entailed on our General Fund to finance the scheme render it so impracticable that we are unable to entertain the proposal."

I mention these facts to show that Council are not unmindful of the position insofar as it affects the ratepayers individually as well as the Council collectively.

MAIN ROADS BOARD.

The Main Roads Board have reduced their annual levy on Councils from one halfpenny in the pound on the U.C.V. of all rateable land to seven-sixteenths of one penny in the pound; it is only one-sixteenth of one penny in the levy but it makes a difference of £200 3s. 3d. per annum in our contribution to the Board. A further concession has been made by

which Council need only pay over to the Board the actual amount collected each month as a result of this special rate; this provision, however, only operates as from the 1st January, 1932, and the Board have demanded that all moneys requisitioned prior to that date must be paid to them in full whether collected by Council or not.

In our case, there was an amount of £810 11s. 4d. due to the Board for contributions to the end of 1931, owing to the fact that the proceeds of this special rate had not been collected. Demands were made upon us to meet this amount in full, the Main Roads Board even going so far as to place the matter in the hands of the Crown Solicitor with instructions to sue the Council to recover the full amount due, together with interest amounting to £107 8s. 10d.

Although the principle of only paying over to the Board the actual amount collected from the special rate had been in force for some considerable time they refused to make these provisions retrospective, so as to include the amount in question. To stop this iniquitous proceeding we appealed to the Minister in charge, as to pay over the sum of £810 11s. 4d. from our General Fund would have seriously embarrassed the Council in its relief works as well as in the carrying out of its ordinary services.

As a result of the conference with the Minister it was eventually agreed that payment of this amount should be spread over a period of two years, the Department to forego all interest charges, amounting to £107 8s. 10d., Council undertaking to make regular payments of £33 15s. 5d. per month for twenty-four consecutive months.

I do not at this juncture intend to deal with the operations of the Main Roads Board, other than to say that as far as Lidcombe is concerned, they make an annual grant to this Council to enable us to maintain the roads leading to the Cemetery, which have already been proclaimed "main roads".

These roads are:—

1. John Street.
2. Church Street (John Street to overhead bridge).
3. Railway Street (overhead bridge to East Street).
4. East Street to Victoria Street.
5. Victoria Street to Joseph Street.
6. Joseph Street, Victoria Street, to the Pipe Line.

In—

1932 we received	.....	£804 19 0
1933 „ „	.....	1529 10 0
1934 „ „	.....	525 0 0

all of which was spent on specified works on the roads just mentioned.

LOAN DEBENTURES.

In 1920, Council raised a loan of £25,000 for the construction of roads, bridges, etc., repayable in thirty equal half-yearly instalments of £1194 8s. 10d., covering principal and interest — a special loan rate being levied each year to meet these payments.

In 1932, the Commonwealth Bank agreed to reduce the rate of interest on our debentures from 5 per cent. to 4 per cent., provided they were met on their due date. Unfortunately in one or two cases we were unable to meet our payments in full on the due date, but on personal representations being made to the Bank, we received the rebate of 1 per cent. on the retirement of each debenture as follows:—

Debentures No. 25	£72 4 1
" " 26	39 7 10
" " 27	31 17 3

It is with pleasure that I am able to advise that all debentures due to date have been met in full. The next debenture, No. 28 falls due on December 1st, and although there will not be sufficient funds at credit of our Loan Rates account to meet the payment in full, we have already arranged with the Bank to pay over the amount collected each month as the result of this Loan Rate as a set off against the debenture, anticipating that the full amount will be collected in the course of the next few months.

With only two more debentures to be met in 1935, the whole of the £25,000 loan, plus interest, will have been repaid, leaving it a simple matter for Council to meet any payments due in respect of moneys borrowed to carry out the Emergency Relief Works.

The loan policies of Municipal and Shire Councils have been a matter of much discussion of late and when it is shown that Councils loan indebtedness at the present moment consists of:—

3 Debentures—

Principal	£3,411 7 1
Interest	£171 19 1
Less Rebate	34 7 9
	<hr/>
	137 11 8

£3,548 18 9

Boundary Roads Loan	£3,500 0 0
Emergency Relief Works	3,000 0 0
Pavilion Loan	1,300 0 0
General Fund Overdraft	6,000 0 0 (approx)

One must admit that your Council, past and present, have guarded the finances of this Municipality with much skill and foresight and the ratepayers are now to reap the benefit of the financial policies laid down by their own Aldermen.

PARRAMATTA ROAD.

The old spectre of "contribution towards the cost of reconstructing Parramatta Road" again raised its head after being quiescent for a period of about twelve years. The Minister for Local Government summoned the Mayors of Auburn and Lidcombe to meet him at the Treasury to discuss the question, pointing out:—

"In connection with the scheme inaugurated in 1920 for the reconstruction of Parramatta Road, the amount of £6,700 11s. 9d., due by your Council for instalments during the four years 1921-24, in respect of your Council's share of the cost of the work still remains unpaid.

"I may point out that, in accordance with the provisions of Secion 13 of the Main Roads Act, 1924, your Council would be relieved of the balance of liability provided all instalments of principal and interest up to the 31st December, 1924, were paid.

"As you are no doubt aware, all other Councils concerned, with the exception of Auburn, have liquidated their indebtedness, and Cabinet recently decided that your Council and Auburn should be called upon to pay the amount due by them."

Although the matter was fourteen years old, Councils files and records of previous transactions in connection with this matter were very complete and we were able to resubmit our views to the Minister in a clear and concise manner, recapitulating in detail the facts as they occurred right from the commencement of the work up to the present time, as a result of which the Mayor was able to report to Council on 27th June, 1934 (vide Minute No. 5161):—

"In pursuance of Council's instruction, the Town Clerk and myself, in conjunction with the Mayor and Local Government (The Hon. E. S. Spooner, Esq., M.L.A.), at the Treasury on the 15th June, 1934, in regard to the Department's claim for arrears of contribution from this Council in respect of the reconstruction of Parramatta Road, which commenced in 1920. We submitted the case from the Council's point of view, based on the lines of the Special Committee's report to this Council dated 21st June, 1924, and traversed the negotiations leading up to that date, and a general review of the situation from thence up to the present time, stressing the

fact right throughout that this Council has always been given to understand by the State Treasurer at that time the Hon. J. T. Lang, Esq., M.L.A., and subsequently when he was Premier of the Country, that this Council would never be called upon to pay the amount in question.

"The deputation was favourably received and the Hon. E. S. Spooner, Esq., M.L.A., has promised to investigate certain aspects of the case, as raised by us, and we have reason to believe that as a result of these inquiries, Council will be relieved of the necessity of making any payment in respect of this old 1920 claim."

Whilst dealing with Parramatta Road, I regret to state that despite all efforts on our part, the question of the closing of the old section between John and Day Streets remains in the same position as it was three years ago. Every avenue likely to be of assistance to Council has been explored and now we can only wait until time and circumstances will render it more opportune to re-open the question with the constructing authorities.

ROAD EXPENDITURE, MAINTENANCE, Etc.

A review of our probable income for the period showed that our activities on the expenditure side would be necessarily curtailed, the amount available for work, of course, being coincident with the amounts of rates collected.

We therefore determined from the outset that we would maintain at all costs the existing roads, leaving new constructions to a more opportune time.

We accordingly instituted a system of real road maintenance, not the indiscriminate patching of a hole here and there, but by resurfacing existing roads and sealing them with a waterproof surface and keeping them in that condition.

When it is realised that at 30th June, 1933, it was calculated that the value of the roads, footpaths, bridges, etc., throughout the whole of this Municipality was £182,613, the necessity for preserving this asset is apparent. Experience has shown how quickly a constructed road can disintegrate and practically disappear, due to the absence of maintenance, and as some of our roads were built with loan moneys, which have not yet been repaid, it is apparent that if the asset were allowed to disappear before the cost of its construction was repaid it would lead to disaster or municipal bankruptcy. It is my proudest boast as Mayor of this Municipality that to-day all our roads are maintained to the highest state of efficiency and all the roads that were constructed prior to the advent of this Council are in better condition to-day than when we first took office.

The work is certainly done by the men in an efficient manner but the policy was dictated by the Council and my constant endeavour has been to keep that standard maintained throughout, and I trust that the principle advanced and practised by this Council will continue as long as Municipal Councils function in Lidcombe.

There are now in this area 26 miles of roads that have been surfaced in this manner and I hope that in the very near future the roads now being constructed under the Relief Scheme will be treated in the same way.

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF WORKS.

The most pressing problem confronting us at the outset was the question of assisting our unemployed. We recognise that it is not the function of local governing bodies to find employment for any large number of men outside its regular band of employees—i.e., those always engaged on purely local government service such as road repairs, maintenance, etc., sanitary, garbage service and the like, but we also felt that, if it were possible in any way to help lighten their burdens it was our duty as representatives of the people to give effect to their wishes, as far as practicable.

The Government of the day sought the assistance of the Councils in providing work for the relief of unemployment, and the Commonwealth Government immediately offered to make money available to Council for this purpose. We decided to avail ourselves of the opportunity and forthwith made application for a grant to construct an Oval and Playing Area in Wyatt Park, receiving a free grant of £3,000.

It is with feelings of great pride that I place on record the fact that this Council was practically the first to lodge an application with some definite constructive proposal, and we had the pleasure of receiving the first cheque drawn on the Government's funds for this purpose.

The story of the Oval is now well known, but I think the following salient features should be recorded in a Minute such as this:—

LIDCOMBE OVAL.

The land was purchased by the Government from the S.M.P. Company for the sum of £4,500, and on the 10th August, 1926, the Premier of the day (the Hon. J. T. Lang, Esq., M.L.A.), attended a meeting of the Lidcombe Council and formally announced the purchase and dedication of the land in question to the Lidcombe Council for park purposes, a scheme was immediately prepared for the development of the park, in which the late Alderman Dr. F. V. McAdam

figured prominently with a proposal for the establishment of a first-grade Oval, and Council even went so far as to agree to the raising of the sum of £7,000 to commence the work.



Council's Engineer standing in the foreground shows depth of filling which was necessary.

Council in its wisdom, however, did not proceed with the loan proposal, but as stated above, we were fortunate enough to get a grant of £3,000 from the Commonwealth Government for the relief of unemployment, and with this money we formed the Oval at practically no cost at all to our ratepayers.



Site of present Oval, showing land that was reclaimed; (first week's work).

As soon as the Oval was formed the necessity for a Pavilion arose and we secured from the Government a grant

of £500 for this purpose, conditionally upon our contributing another £500. The grant was accepted and by the aid of another loan of £1,300 we were able to complete the Pavilion with conveniences attached thereto according to plans and specifications prepared by ourselves.

Several additional facilities have been provided, such as a scoring board, ticket office, turnstiles, etc., and there are other minor improvements that will be attended to as opportunity presents.

Immediately the Oval was finished, we were inundated with requests to construct a cycle track round same. After a series of conferences with the cycling clubs and being assured that the construction of the track was warranted, both from a sporting as well as a financial point of view, we set about constructing one.

Enquiries were made as to the most suitable class of track, and we have now adopted one which is modelled on the track that encircles the ground of Parc de Princes, Paris, which is



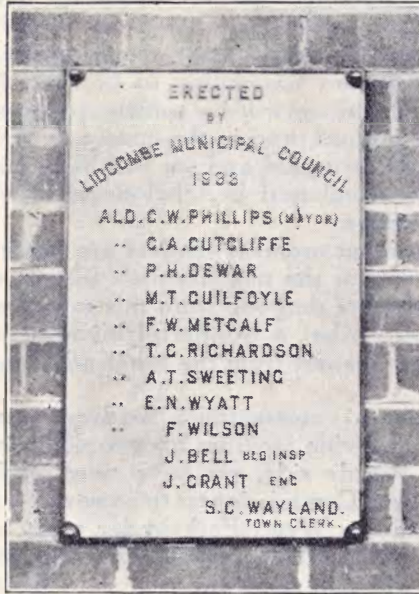
Another view from a different angle.

Council owned and also the new Coney Island Velodrome now controlled by Fred Fogler. (For this information and design of the two tracks in question we are indebted to the Cycling Editor of the "Referee" Newspaper.)

The surface construction of the track is a new idea, originating from this Council, and promises to give a wonderful surface for cycle racing and will be superior to the surface on any other track in or around Sydney.

Already we have in hand applications from private promoters of cycling carnivals, the N.S.W. League of Wheelmen and the local Cycle Clubs for use of this track, and if the interest at present manifested can be taken as any criterion, then the ultimate success of this venture is assured.

The construction of this track should be completed in the course of the next few weeks, but it is recognised that it is desirable in order to get the full value from the track that the



Commemoration Plaque.

Oval should be illuminated at night; this is essential for football training as well as for cycling. Preliminary negotiations



View from Outside the Oval.

have been commenced with the City Council for the supply of electricity, and the installation of same will doubtless be

one of the first problems for the new Council to take in hand.

Council possesses a wonderful asset in this Oval, both from the point of view of accommodating sporting bodies in the town and advertising the advantages of the area as well as providing amusement and recreation for our own residents.

The whole undertaking has been completed up to the present at a cost to this Council of approximately £2,000; of the borrowed money amounting to £1,300, the income from the cricket clubs alone will be sufficient to meet payments of principal and interest, and in the course of the next five years these loans will be repaid and we will have this valuable asset absolutely unencumbered and belonging wholly to the residents of Lidcombe.

At the present moment tenders are being invited for the use of the Oval for the next football season, and the income which we anticipate deriving from this source will demonstrate beyond measure what a wonderful investment this Oval will be to the Council apart from the other advantages enumerated above.

In addition to constructing a roadway from Church Street to the Oval to provide facilities for people desiring access from the Railway Parade side, we have now received permission from the Railway Commissioners to construct a footbridge from Railway Parade to Wyatt Park under what is known as the Double Arch; this, besides providing an approach to the Lidcombe Oval will also serve those persons desirous of crossing the line to the northern part of the town by the route which has been blocked by the construction of the stormwater channel.

EMERGENCY RELIEF WORKS.

In 1933 the State Government adopted the principle of "Work for Dole" and again sought the co-operation of Councils in giving effect to this undertaking. We investigated the proposal and felt that the adoption of this scheme in Lidcombe would be beneficial to the town itself as well as to the men, and accordingly in June, 1933, we asked the Government to put the scheme in operation in our area, and we forthwith commenced work on Wyatt Park and sundry roads, employing 616 men. To-day, we have 679, the highest number at any one time was in the month of September, when our figures reached 772.

These men are divided into approximately 20 classifications, according to their responsibilities, with a different number of hours allotted to each classification; we have to adopt a roster system to correspond with the tools and plant available for the men, and I mentioned this fact to give some

idea of the intricate details of organisation involved in an undertaking such as this.

Under this scheme the Department provide the wages to pay the men, grant small margins in the way of bonuses to skilled tradesmen, and in addition pay to Council a bonus of 10 per cent. on the wages paid to assist us in defraying administrative costs, insurances, transport and the like, Council undertaking to provide materials and do such other things as are necessary to keep the men employed.

Our contention that the scheme was desirable and in the interests of the men has now been substantiated; at first there was some opposition from the men's point of view but after the work had been in operation for a period of three months. Council discussed the advisability or otherwise of continuing the scheme and actually a resolution was passed by a narrow majority that we should abandon the scheme forthwith. As soon as Council's decision became known, such a strong case was advanced by the men to Council, supported by petitions and deputations, that several of the Aldermen changed their views on the question and rescinded their previous decision, allowing the work to be carried on, provided it was always kept within the confines of Council's financial ability to shoulder the burden of providing materials and expenses incidental to the carrying out of the scheme.

At the outset it was recognised that in order to obtain the maximum benefit from any expenditure of the Council's funds, the works to be undertaken should be useful and of a more or less permanent character. Road construction at once suggested itself, but we were confronted with the fact that to construct roads up to Council's standard, specifications of ballast and blue metal, the cost of materials would be prohibitive; we were forced, therefore, to seek a cheaper class of construction.

A proposal was submitted that we should construct light roads of gravel and one or two roads were put down with this material. We then decided that better results would be obtained by substituting a mixture of blue metal and other materials, the discard from the crushers at the Blue Metal Quarry. Negotiations were commenced with the quarry owners for supplies and we succeeded in contracting for the supply and delivery of one thousand tons at 5s. per ton and a further thousand tons at 5s. 3d.

Unfortunately the field was not left to us alone, as, after the Lidcombe Council had demonstrated the value of this material for the construction of light roads, other Councils adopted the method and a market having thus been established the price of the commodity rose accordingly and, to-day, we

are paying 6s. 6d. per ton for the same material delivered on the job.

The total quantities purchased by us to-date is slightly over sixteen thousand tons and when it is realised that formerly we used to pay 7/6 per ton for the same material, one appreciates what an excellent bargain we made in the purchase of this material.

We were also influenced on the road question by the fact that the previous Council had concentrated its efforts on concrete footpaths, kerbing and guttering, etc., and no road work of any consequence had been attempted for several years. By our policy of light road construction we have endeavoured to balance up the work, giving now a fairly equal percentage of roads, footpaths and gutters evenly distributed throughout each section of the Municipality.

The Department made it a condition of the work that we should not undertake any work that would interfere with the Council's ordinary undertakings and thus dispense with Council's regular employees; this condition has been faithfully adhered to, and of all the work undertaken I can safely say that but for these relief works they would not be even contemplated at the present juncture. Further, in work of this class there is a fair amount of skilled labour required, and in order that we should have the best possible results for the expenditure incurred by Council, we re-employed three or four of our ex-employees to do this technical part and they have been kept in regular employment ever since that date.

In order to finance this scheme we borrowed from the Local Government Department the sum of £3,000 repayable over a period of five years with interest at the rate of three per cent. to purchase materials, and the Commonwealth Bank allowed us an extension of the overdraft by the sum of another £1,000 for the same purpose. We also receive from the Department, as a result of the 10 per cent. bonus, a sum of £80 per week, and thus the financing of the scheme up-to-date has presented no difficulty to Council or any undue strain on our financial resources, more particularly is this realised when it is noted that the bonuses received to-date amount to £4,530 16s. 11d., whilst the value of the blue metal purchased is only approximately £5,000.

The clerical work is done by men selected from among the relief workers under the direction of the Town Clerk, and these men have paid out in wages to their fellow employees up to 25th October, 1934, the sum of £50,670 1s., whilst the gangs are controlled by gangers also taken from among the Emergency Relief Workers under the superintendence of the Engineer.

It should be realised that the men, by receiving work for

the dole, increase the value of their weekly sustenance allowance by an average of 30 per cent. to 40 per cent., and, as far as Council is concerned, we have had approximately six miles of roadway constructed, our park area reclaimed, miles of streets regraded, water tables cleaned out and other work which more than compensates Council for the expenditure of portion of the ratepayers' money on this work in the purchase of materials, etc.

STORMWATER CHANNEL CONSTRUCTION.

In addition to the works undertaken by Council under the Emergency Relief Scheme, the Public Works Department have undertaken the construction of stormwater channels through this area, absorbing men from other areas where emergency relief work under the control of the local Council is not in operation, involving an expenditure of £102,050.

Under this heading they have constructed the main barrel of the stormwater channel through Wyatt Park, the branch channel on the western side of the Oval — portion of it being completely covered, which will enable the fence on the western boundary of the Oval to be extended westerly should circumstances so demand — without interfering with the balance of the space in Wyatt Park now being used as a playing area: two other sections are now in the course of construction: (1) From Wyatt Park to Berala Station; (2) from Joseph Street through the State Hospital to the source of this stormwater channel. It is hoped with the completion of the State Hospital section the Department will then commence that section between Joseph Street and Berala Station and the branch channels, thus completing the construction of this channel from its commencement as far as Booreea Street.

At present there is a temporary hold-up of the extension from Booreea Street to the tidal waters of Haslem's Creek, but steps are being taken by this Council to overcome the obstacles that are delaying this extension, and we hope to see the whole length of this stormwater channel completed in the very near future.

The construction of this channel will not only deal with the drainage of this part of the Municipality but will permit of access being given to certain streets that have been severed by erosion of the banks of the natural stormwater channel. The Public Works Department have agreed to construct a street crossing over this stormwater channel at Wilfred Street and have advised that "the side walls of the Clarence Street and Livingstone Road crossings should be constructed in such a way that they can be covered by slab construction at a later date when settlement warrants the adoption of that course. In Railway Street they have agreed to replace the existing

wooden bridge by a concrete construction extending from building line to building line.

The question of the construction of these street crossings is not quite satisfactory to this Council as we believe that we should be more generously treated in this respect; arrangements are being made to interview the Minister for Public Works in regard to this matter and we hope in the very near future to announce even more favourable consideration being given us than stated above.

It will be remembered that the Church Street stormwater channel including the main channel across Marne Park were also constructed by the P.W.D. as relief works, so it will be seen that as far as our Public Works Policy is concerned, the introduction of relief works in Lidcombe has been of inestimable value to us, permitting works to be undertaken forthwith which were altogether beyond the financial resources of this Council even to contemplate.

FOOTPATHS.

With the continuation of the relief Works, Council has endeavoured to extend its activities in an effort to provide benefits for as many sections of the community as is reasonably possible, and in furtherance of this object we are now commencing the construction of footpaths.

Experience has shown that the mere coating of footpaths with ashes or gravel has been both costly and unsatisfactory, a more permanent class of construction being essential. At the outset we were again faced with the question of cost; concrete footpaths cost 8s. per square yard and asphalt 4s. 6d., so we have been engaged in trying to find a cheaper and equally serviceable class of construction. A new idea in footpath construction has been advanced by me and Council have agreed to put down certain experimental sections—viz., in Second Avenue, Allen Street and Nottinghill Road; this work will be carried out at a cost of approximately 2s. per square yard, and if it proves as satisfactory as we anticipate, Council will be enabled to put down many more similar footpaths at a minimum of cost and in such a way as to afford the maximum benefit to another section of our ratepayers.

BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION.

A splendid example of co-operation with this Council was afforded by the Lidcombe Businessmen's Association who voluntarily made a levy on their members of one shilling per member per week for a period of about nine months, the proceeds of such levy to be paid to the Council to assist in providing employment for some of our unemployed residents.

We subsidised the amount thus received and were enabled to employ an additional man for many months attending to minor maintenance matters that otherwise would have had to be left undone.

The moral effect of this act of co-operation is far greater than the cash value of the money received, as it demonstrated to all, firstly, that the unemployed had the active sympathy of all sections of the community; secondly, that the Council had the confidence and backing of the businessmen in their endeavours to grapple with the financial situation insofar as it affected Council's administration.

This confidence I feel sure has been maintained during the three years under review, as was again demonstrated during our Gala Week Celebrations, and I look forward to even greater efforts in this direction in the future.

The Businessmen's Association can do much to brighten up our town, providing for the requirements and comforts of the residents, thus making the town a more attractive one from a residential as well as a commercial point of view.

The additions to the premises of the A.G.E.I. and the Lidcombe Textile Works, the remodelling of some of our shops, the acquisition and remodelling of its own premises by the Bank of New South Wales, the erection of the Plaza Dance Hall and the signs of revival in the building trade portend a return towards pre-depression conditions.

The extent of the slump in buildings during the past three years and the signs of recovery are shown in the following schedule of buildings erected:—

1932,	3 Cottages, total value	£885
1933,	3 " " "	1422
1934,	16 " " "	7885

FREE COKE SUPPLY.

During the past three winters for a period of approximately thirteen weeks each, the Australian Gas Light Company have made available to this Council fifty bags of coke per week for distribution among the distressed of the district; in this respect we have utilised the services of the organisation of the Unemployed Workers' League and the full amount has been distributed on a very comprehensive basis, affording warmth and comfort to many needy families, again demonstrating the co-operation that exists between this Council and the various organisations in the town.

BOOT REPAIRING DEPOT.

Soon after the men started on this relief work it was forcibly brought under our notice the need for attention to be given to their footwear; many of them turned up to work in light shoes and in other cases their boots were in such a state

of disrepair as to be totally unsuitable for men employed on this class of work. Council immediately entered into negotiation with the Department of Labour and Industry and we succeeded in having a boot repairing depot established at the Town Hall, Lidcombe, by which means boots are repaired free of charge to the men and they are allowed repairs at the rate of approximately one pair per man each three months.

We were fortunate in securing some practical tradesmen for the job and the whole of the work, organisation, etc., is under the direct control of this Council and its Officers.

Up to the present 1518 pairs of boots have been repaired at a total cost of approximately 4s. 1d. per pair. (Since writing the foregoing paragraph the Department of Labour and Industry have given instructions for the repair depot to be closed, stating that they intend issuing new boots direct to the men in lieu of the depot repair scheme. In view of the fact that only one issue of boots is to take place annually, we feel the necessity for the repair depot still exists and we are now in communication with the Department for the re-opening of our depot.)

DISTRIBUTION OF CLOTHING.

In addition to looking after the footwear of the men, we have been fortunate in securing three lots of clothing from the sewing schools conducted by the Department of Labour and Industry at certain centres.

This clothing was handed over to the Mayor for distribution, and this Council, acting on my suggestion, formed a Committee consisting of representatives of the various churches and organised charitable associations in order that the distribution might be made as equitable as possible and to the most worthy cases.

The supplies fall very far short of our requirements and the system, perhaps, is not one to commend itself, but as it has formed an integral part of Council's activities in trying to alleviate distress in the Municipality, I place the matter on record hoping that in the very near future our agitation to secure for the men an extra day's work per week will have borne fruit and the conditions of the men will have improved to such an extent that the need for "hand-outs" such as these will have ceased to exist.

DISTRIBUTION OF PRIMARY PRODUCE.

Doubtless you will recall that last Christmas, as well as again during this year, the Government made available parcels of primary produce for distribution; once again the assistance of Councils was invoked and we were able to organise a representative committee to control and direct the distribution within this Municipality.

In the first case we were allotted 500 parcels, but owing to the activities of this Council we were fortunately able to augment this number by another 150 parcels, making our total issue on that occasion 650. In the second distribution, however, we were restricted to our original quota of 500 parcels.

Although the original object of this distribution was, we understand, to assist the primary producer, in effect, it conferred considerable assistance on some of our residents and is matter that might be considered worthy of being emulated in other directions.

AGITATION FOR INCREASED SCALE FOR RELIEF WORKERS.

Recognising that these "hand-outs" are only palliatives, and that no remedial measures appear to be even foreshadowed by our leaders, Council decided to ask the Government to increase the work allowance to men engaged on emergency relief works by allowing each man to work an extra day per week. In addition to approaching the Government direct, we sought the assistance of the Local Government Association and circularised all Shire and Municipal Councils throughout the State, seeking their endorsement of this proposal and co-operation in approaching the Government to give effect to the scheme.

In order to fully appreciate Council's motives and the reasons advanced in support of their contention, I cannot do better at this juncture than to quote the following extract from our letters to the Councils:—

Firstly.—The move is strictly non-political and emanates from a Council which was elected as a non-political body.

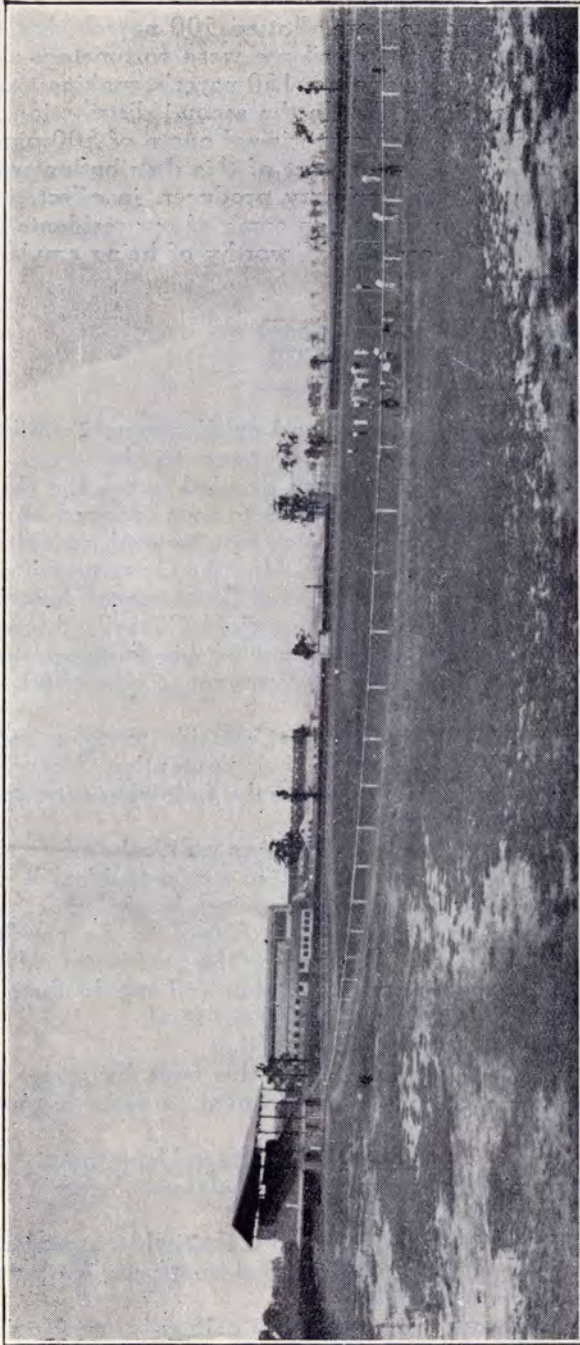
Secondly.—We believe in the principle of "work for the dole" but at the same time we are forced to the conclusion that the amount of money received by the men is not sufficient to keep them in a reasonable condition and supply them with the necessities of life other than perhaps food.

This is exemplified by the fact that:—

1. The Government augments this issue by grants from the Chief Secretary's Department to assist in paying rent.
2. Assistance from the Child Welfare Department.
3. Special Food Issues for certain classes of men.
4. Issues of clothing and boots.

This in turn is supplemented by charitable organisations actively engaged in supplying medical comforts, fresh vegetables and the like.

Now, the "work for dole" was primarily, as far as we know, to do away with this charity and re-establish the morale



The Oval.

of the men, but it is found by experience that this object has not been attained, as in its present form it is just a combination of both systems.

The response from the Councils has been most gratifying, considerably over one hundred agreeing to write direct to the Minister, through their Parliamentary Representatives, urging the adoption of the proposal, and we feel that if public opinion can be moulded to see eye to eye with Council in this proposal, some measure of success is assured, and if we succeed even in obtaining a slight improvement on the existing conditions, we will have achieved much on behalf of our unemployed.

NEW ROAD.—JOSEPH ST. TO THE TEN MILE HILL, LIVERPOOL RD.

The establishment of a road from Joseph Street, Lidcombe, through the State Hospital grounds to connect with the Liverpool Road in the vicinity of the Ten Mile Hill has for long been an ambition of the Lidcombe Council.

An attempt was first made to secure the land for this road in 1920, and ever since that date there has been a series of negotiations between this Council and the various interested land-holders along the line of route, involving the Public Health Department, Railway Commissioners, Cemetery Trustees, Strathfield Golf Club and adjoining municipalities.

The first part of the story is now "ancient history", many schemes being advanced, amended and finally discarded, but another chapter has been added by this Council. We, after all these years have succeeded in having sufficient land resumed and dedicated for a public road to permit of this "Ten Mile Hill" Road being constructed now or at any time in the future.

The actual construction should present no difficulty as we have had deviations made in the route as originally adopted so as to avoid expensive crossings over creeks and the railway line.

The road now traverses from Joseph Street, Lidcombe, through the State Hospital grounds running parallel with the Regents Park-Enfield Railway Line until it approaches Mitchell Road, where it deviates northerly through Cemetery owned land for a few chains, linking up again with Mitchell Road, after which it continues easterly via that road and through the Golf Links area to a point at the Railway Embankment directly opposite the junction of Ada Avenue, Curnow Avenue and Pemberton Road, thus linking up with three other outlets and yet only a few chains from the original objective, the Ten Mile Hill on Liverpool Road.

The cost of the original scheme would have been pro-

hibitive whilst the new road eliminates all difficulties in the matter of construction and the saving in the cost of crossing the creeks and water-worn areas should be nearly sufficient to cover the cost of the actual road construction itself.

Of course, before the road is open to traffic, provision must be made for a subway under the railway embankment, at the Strathfield end, which should not present much difficulty or expense, and presents the final obstacle to be overcome, but I have no doubt that this Council in co-operation with the Main Roads Board or some other Government Department, together with the Strathfield Council will soon find a solution of the problem.

The opening of this road will save a detour of approximately four miles for persons travelling from Lidcombe via the Liverpool Road, will give access for vehicular traffic to the southern parts of the Cemetery besides opening up large areas of land now without reasonable access.

Our best thanks go out to the Hon. E. A. Buttenshaw, M.L.A., Minister for Lands, for the advice tendered us in the final stages of the negotiation in connection with the establishment of this road.

LIDCOMBE - REGENTS PARK 'BUS SERVICE.

The restoration of the Lidcombe-Regents Park 'bus service stands as a great record of achievement as far as this Council is concerned. With the advent of the new Transport Act this 'bus service was classed as "competitive" with the Railway, and the taxation that would have had to be paid would have made the run unprofitable to the Proprietor, thus the service was discontinued. An agitation immediately cropped up from the residents and businessmen urging the restoration of this 'bus service. For over two years the matter was the subject of correspondence between Council and the Transport Commissioner and the proprietor of the 'bus service. All efforts to even get a deputation to the Transport Commissioner, although we enlisted the aid of our Parliamentary Representative, proving abortive.

Rival schemes were advanced by the proprietor of the Auburn 'Bus Service to link up Lidcombe Station with Auburn Station via a very circuitous route. The scheme was actually approved by the Transport Commissioner but we felt that such a service was not in the best interests of Lidcombe. Further, as the line of road was identical with a great section of the Lidcombe - Park Road Service, we felt that if it were once established the chance of getting a Lidcombe - Regents Park Service was gone for all time as it seemed very unlikely that two services would be established when the line of road would coincide to such a large extent; also this would have

isolated, at least for many years, the southern part of our Municipality from the Railway Station, as well as being detrimental to Lidcombe from a commercial point of view, however much it might have benefited Auburn.

We had been rebuffed so often by the Transport Commissioner in regard to the Regents Park Service that some were inclined to accept this proposal as the only one we were likely to ever have granted, but the majority felt that Lidcombe's requirements demanded even further effort on our part to that already taken. Backed up by our people we were at last enabled to submit a case to the Commissioner, at least justifying our claims to be heard by him personally. A deputation was accordingly arranged and after a memorable discussion we were enabled to prove that a grave injustice was being done to Lidcombe, and as soon as we made this point clear, the Commissioner magnanimously restored the service, though not on the original route. The present route does not cater for our people to the extent that we would like, but it is a step in the right direction, and we feel sure that we will be quite justified in the very near future in approaching the Commissioner for an amendment of the route, so as to give greater facility to our residents in this regard.

GALA WEEK.

No record of Council's doings would be complete without reference to our Gala Week which was held from June 10th to June 16th, 1933, both dates inclusive, as the function was sponsored by this Council with every Alderman an active and responsible member of the Committee.

Now that the excitement of the week is over, one is able to visualise the venture in its true perspective and see what a wonderful effort it was and also pay tribute to those who contributed so materially towards making the various functions associated with it so successful. The Gala Week was arranged to celebrate the opening of the Lidcombe Oval and dedication of the Pavilion—which ceremony was performed by J. T. Lang, Esq., M.L.A., assisted by S. A. Lloyd, Esq., M.L.A.—and at the same time to assist our local hospitals and charities, opportunity being taken to also include the opening of the Plaza Dance Hall.

The outstanding feature of the celebration was the visit of His Excellency, Sir Phillip Game and Lady Game to the Gala Week Ball, together with the wonderful display of loyalty shown by the record crowd, estimated at 5,000 persons, who gathered in the street to extend a welcome to the Vice-Regal party.

The full details of the week's gaieties have been preserved in the Brochure issued by this Council on that occasion and

which also collates an authentic history of early Lidcombe and its institutions. The only addition I now wish to make to this record is that the net proceeds of the Week resulted in the sum of £502 8s. 6d. being distributed to hospitals and charities as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
St. Joseph Hospital	170	0	0
Auburn District Hospital	120	0	0
Auburn Ambulance	90	0	0
Lidcombe Benevolent Society	50	16	2
North Lidcombe Medical Relief Society	40	16	2
Vegetable Relief Committee	30	16	2

The conduct of the whole Week's celebration demonstrated the great spirit of co-operation that exists between this Council, the commercial interests of the town and district and the charitable and allied institutions; and besides marking an era of progress demonstrated the administrative ability of this Council to grapple with big problems thus showing the investing public and others, that although Lidcombe is passing through strenuous times its Municipal Council is fully "alive" to the situation and are able to grasp any opportunities that may arise, demanding their care and attention as well as the welfare of their people at large.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT.

In addition to the ordinary functions of Council that I have recorded, I feel this is an opportune moment to mention other avenues of progress and development in our area which have occurred during this last Triennial period. These undertakings, though not under the control of Council, form an integral part of the life and activities of the Municipality and as such are landmarks in the growth of the suburbs. The extension of industries show that Lidcombe possesses advantages and facilities in the matter of accommodation for industrial undertakings, whilst the growth of sporting activities and the welfare movement in connection with the Returned Soldiers, show a healthy development of the community spirit.

These additions and improvements may be summarised as follows:—

Schools.—Additions to the Public School at Berala. Reconstruction of Denominational School at South Lidcombe. Efforts to remodel Lidcombe Public School still under consideration.

Lidcombe State Hospital.—A new administrative block, Infectious Diseases Hospital.

Meat Industry Board.—Extensive alterations and new buildings.



“The Straight” in the Cycle Track.

Factories.—Additions to A.G.E.I. Works. Additions to Textile Works.

Public Halls.—Plaza Dance Hall. Returned Soldiers; new hall in Wellington Park (work now commencing).

Sporting.—Carnarvon Golf Club—new Links and Club House.

These links were originally constructed on ground, the lease of which was terminable at varying periods, giving the Club no security of tenure which did not tend towards a heavy expenditure being incurred in the development of the course. Portion of the Newington State Hospital grounds have now been secured for this purpose, a new club house has been erected, greens and fairways constructed, and the Carnarvon Golf Club bids fair to equal any of the suburban clubs similarly situated.

The Club House for the Returned Soldiers (referred to above) is now in the course of erection in Wellington Park; besides adding architecturally to the beauty of the area, the lay-out of the Park will be enhanced and the new structure, existing buildings, Soldiers' Memorial, garden plots and the like will harmonise in symmetry and order.

GENERAL.

I have for three years held office as Mayor of this Municipality, following in the footsteps of many honourable and able men. I have striven to give to the best of my ability both in time and knowledge, and I verily believe the result of much of my work in this direction is permanently recorded in the public works undertaken by this Council, more particularly as regards the construction of the Lidcombe Oval and the erection of the Grandstand, etc.

It has been a pleasure and privilege to preside over such a gathering of Aldermen who have so whole-heartedly applied themselves to the interests and welfare of their fellow men in an honorary capacity. They have had to grapple with problems hitherto considered outside the ambit of Local Government, and the methods employed and results obtained have demonstrated beyond question that Councils are capable of handling greater powers for Local Government.

There are many powers given to Councils in the Local Government Act that as yet, as far as we are concerned, are untouched and seem likely to remain so, but who would venture to say that after our handling of the Unemployed Relief Works and the welfare movements in connection with our

residents during this depression period, that we are not qualified to continue the work of registration of unemployed that is now done by the Department of Labour and Industry, take over much of the relief work and assistance now issued by the Chief Secretary's Department; also the power to register dogs and fix the fees for registration; resume dairy supervision and milk distribution and such other duties as registration of births, deaths and marriages, etc., etc.

Of course, the funds to carry on these works would have to be provided by the Central Government the same as they are now, but our local knowledge and organisation to be availed of the same as is done by the Main Roads Board in connection with the maintenance of main roads in our area. The saving in administrative costs to the central body would enable the Council to be reimbursed for expenses incurred in carrying out these additional functions, and I am sure the system would result in a huge saving to the Departments concerned as well as give as great, if not greater, efficiency.

These are matters that might well occupy the attention of the incoming Aldermen to bring under the notice of our Parliamentary Representatives in the hope that the long promised extension of Local Government powers might become an established fact instead of, as at present, the plaything of politicians.

In conclusion, may I be permitted to quote the words of Mr. Justice Ferguson on the occasion of his honourable retirement from the Bench recently:—

“It is cheering and encouraging to be certain that as one by one we step down, our place will be taken by men inspired by the same ideals, men who will strive as we have humbly striven, to uphold and pass on unimpaired, the traditions that those who went before us gave into our keeping.”

C. W. PHILLIPS,

(Mayor).

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"The Dentley Print." Granville.—UW 8651.

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C. W. PIERCE

(Signed)

